Courageous Leadership in 'Little Miss Sunshine'

Movie Review:

Courageous Leadership in

Reviewed by
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“Little Miss Sunshine” is a hilarious 2006 film about a dysfunctional family’s road trip to the daughter Olive’s beauty pageant. I have used and discussed it in missional leadership classes, and my children have watched the movie even more times than I have. The overworked mum, try-hard Dad, silent brother, gay Uncle, and drug-using grandfather all pile in to their VW bus to accompany Olive across the country and fulfill her dream. Family tensions escalate and different family members experience personal setbacks along the way – unscrupulous partners, health scares, vocational disappointments. But the family learns to rely on one another in fresh ways. They discover how to offer a safe place for one another and cheer on each other’s dreams. At first you think it is a family gone mad. But as they rally around, and in an ironically powerful counter-cultural ending – you realise they are ironically a safe family in a world gone mad.

We all need a community and family that offers a safe place for us. For our families and our churches, I reckon fostering safe and counter-cultural space, and offering permission for one another to be all we are made to be, is part of courageous leadership.

Darren Cronshaw pastors AuburnLife and is BUV’s researcher in our Mission Catalyst Team. He invites your response in the blog below.